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ABSTRACT

One possible benefit of the availability of free or low cost education is reduced reliance on welfare and public assistance among those who attain higher levels of education. The extent to which people with more education rely less on welfare and public assistance is an indication of this benefit. In 1992, high school dropouts were three times more likely to receive income from Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) or public assistance than high school graduates who did not go on to college (17 percent versus 6 percent). Between 1972 and 1992, both high school dropouts and graduates who did not go on to college became more likely to receive AFDC or public assistance income. The increase in the likelihood of receiving welfare income was greater for high school dropouts than for graduates who did not go on to college. The difference between the two groups in the percentage receiving such income rose from 7 to 12 percent. However, not all people who attain higher levels of education do so because of the availability of low cost education. Therefore, the indicator may overstate this benefit from public investment in education. (A chart shows percentage of persons aged 25-34 who received income from AFDC or public assistance, by years of schooling completed: 1972-92. Two graphs identify percentage of persons 25-34 who received income from AFDC or public assistance, by years of schooling completed: 1972-92. The first includes all persons; the second shows percentages by race/ethnicity.) (YLB)

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ED 385 750

INDICATOR OF THE MONTH

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

July 1995

Welfare recipiency, by educational attainment

Public investment in education has many potential benefits for the nation. One possible benefit of the availability of free or low cost education is reduced reliance on welfare and public assistance programs among those who attain higher levels of education. The extent to which people with more education rely less on welfare and public assistance is an indication of this benefit. However, not all people who attain higher levels of education do so because of the availability of low cost education. Therefore, the indicator may overstate this benefit from public investment in education.

- **In 1992, high school dropouts were three times more likely to receive income from AFDC or public assistance than high school graduates who did not go on to college (17 percent versus 6 percent).**
- **Between 1972 and 1992, both high school dropouts and graduates who did not go on to college became more likely to receive AFDC or public assistance income. During this period, the increase in the likelihood of receiving welfare income was greater for high school dropouts than for graduates who did not go on to college. Therefore, the difference between the two groups in the percentage receiving such income rose (from 7 percent to 12 percent).**

Percentage of persons aged 25–34 who received income from AFDC or public assistance, by years of schooling completed: 1972–92

	Years of schooling completed											
	All persons						White		Black		Hispanic	
Year	All levels	Less than 9 years	9–11 years	12 years	13–15 years	16 years or more	9–11 years	12 years	9–11 years	12 years	9–11 years	12 years
1972	4.0	11.5	9.7	3.2	1.5	0.4	6.0	2.2	23.2	12.2	9.6	3.4
1973	3.9	11.7	10.3	3.3	1.7	0.6	5.6	2.1	25.9	12.1	16.2	5.5
1974	4.3	15.0	11.7	3.3	2.0	0.8	8.0	2.4	25.0	10.7	14.2	3.8
1975	3.6	11.3	11.0	3.3	1.5	0.3	7.0	2.4	27.8	10.0	10.6	3.4
1976	3.8	10.9	12.2	3.5	2.1	0.4	7.5	2.3	27.0	11.4	15.0	4.7
1977	3.9	11.7	12.0	3.9	2.1	0.3	8.0	2.6	26.4	12.4	13.1	6.6
1978	3.9	10.8	12.7	3.6	2.5	0.4	7.7	2.3	28.1	12.4	13.7	6.9
1979	3.9	12.4	12.8	3.8	2.1	0.6	7.9	2.5	26.8	12.0	15.1	5.4
1980	4.2	11.8	12.7	4.4	2.5	0.4	8.5	3.2	25.3	12.9	14.2	4.5
1981	4.4	11.5	13.6	4.6	2.7	0.5	9.5	2.9	29.1	14.9	13.3	5.0
1982	4.0	9.6	14.1	4.3	2.1	0.3	10.3	2.6	25.8	13.6	14.2	5.4
1983	4.2	11.4	14.7	4.3	2.5	0.3	10.7	2.6	26.8	13.4	15.5	5.2
1984	4.3	13.2	14.9	4.2	2.4	0.8	10.6	2.7	30.3	12.6	10.6	5.7
1985	4.2	11.8	14.0	4.4	2.6	0.4	9.5	3.1	30.7	11.7	13.2	5.2
1986	4.2	11.8	14.1	4.5	2.4	0.3	11.2	2.9	25.7	11.8	10.6	6.8
1987	4.2	13.2	12.5	4.5	2.5	0.3	7.8	2.9	28.5	12.4	10.7	5.9
1988	4.0	11.5	13.8	4.2	2.1	0.2	9.2	2.8	28.9	11.6	14.0	4.8
1989	3.9	8.8	13.4	4.1	2.4	0.4	8.5	2.9	30.3	10.9	12.0	4.4
1990	4.4	8.9	15.1	4.7	2.5	0.5	10.6	3.2	30.9	13.0	13.2	5.3
1991	5.0	11.4	16.0	5.5	3.1	0.5	11.9	4.0	28.6	13.1	15.1	6.0
1992	5.1	9.9	17.1	5.6	3.7	0.5	11.3	4.0	35.6	13.2	15.0	7.2

Table reads: In 1992, among persons aged 25–34 with 9–11 years of schooling, 17.1 percent received income from AFDC or public assistance. Among persons with 12 years of schooling, 5.6 received such income.

NOTE: Beginning in 1992, the Current Population Survey changed the questions used to obtain the educational attainment of respondents.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, March Current Population Surveys.

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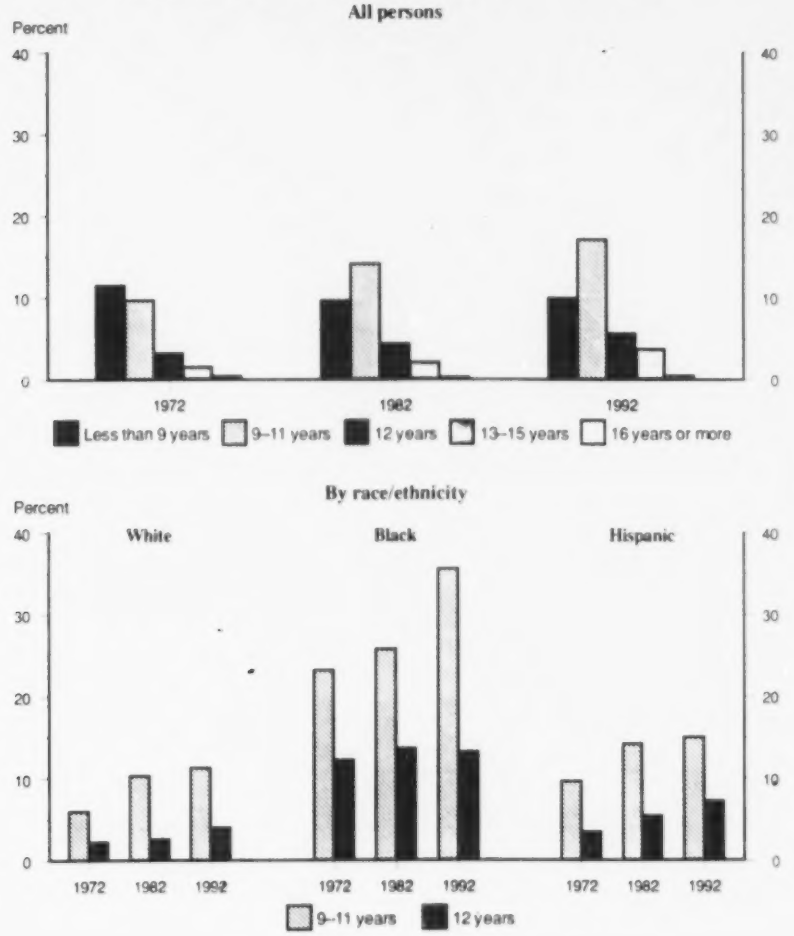
Percentage of persons 25–34 who received income from AFDC or public assistance, by years of schooling completed: 1972–92



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, March Current Population Surveys.

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